/113/

Physicians are not consulted in any case. All illnesses that do not show external influences are traced back to evil sorcery or to the "pest" (see under "Religion"/see p. 191 ff./). They must therefore be treated by the native shamans /see the glossary, p. 250 /. Open wounds and injuries are treated by the midwife. Now and then, however, people visit the mission station in order to have a tooth pulled, on which occasion the nurses without reservation praise their great steadfastness in enduring pain.

The impairment to health caused by the consumption of coca and chicha seems to me to be exaggerated by the authorities; it would be even less with sensible and nourishing food. The prohibition against coca consumption and the government's battle against coca and chicha give the impression of being more a struggle against a brandy tax deficit, for alcohol under the state monopoly may be sold to any Indio in any quantity. The fact that the Paez generally does not work hard and continuously probably has nothing to do with any degeneration caused by the stimulants mentioned, but rather it is quite simply his psychological attitude which does not let him see why a human being should strive for things which seem unnecessary to him, things beyond his animal necessities of life, eating and reproduction. I often asked whether, in their opinion, there might come a time when the Paez, too, would wear only Colombian clothing or even use electric lighting. They had never thought about it and in no instance had an answer.

II. Material Culture

1. The Dwelling

a) The Settlement

Politically and sociologically the Paez villages of Tierradentro embrace the inhabitants of a valley basin more or less closed off by the surrounding mountains. In their structure, however, they are not villages in our sense, by which we understand a locally concentrated aggregation of a number of houses,

2: Pittier de Fábrega E-4, 5 (1906) 1907
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stroyed the city of Caloto, then on the Magdalena river, according to Alcedo. But it is not unlikely that, later on, during their decline, the Pijaos, Paés, and perhaps several other tribes became mixed, and those whom we now call *Paez* are the survivors in blood, customs, and traditions, of all these frequently named *parcialidades* or *naciones*.

Physical Characteristics

There is no special reference by former writers respecting the physical characteristics of these Indians, probably because of the apparent uniformity in type of all the tribes of tropical South America. According to my own very fleeting observations the Paez are small, broad-shouldered, with small bony hands, and feet broadened toward the extremities. Their skin is very dark, a character common to all Indians living at great altitudes. In the case of almost every adult, both male and female, coming under my observation, I observed a fine black pubescence covering all visible parts of the body. They appear to be generally strong and healthy, and their physical endurance is not below the average. On our trip across the cordillera each adult man carried at least thirty kilograms, and many of them more than fifty, and none complained of being too heavily laden, although the trail up to nearly 4,000 meters and down again was exceedingly rough and steep, requiring at times not only much exertion but equal presence of mind.

It is well to mention, after Uricoechea, that the Paeces are naturally inclined to warfare, and invariably join one side or the other in the unceasing Colombian revolutions. In early times they raided the Spanish establishments, the destruction of Caloto on two occasions (the first time in 1641) being still held by them in vivid remembrance as glorious feats of their ancestors. I was even assured that not long ago, during the last war, they were with difficulty prevented from making an incursion on the neighboring Cauca cattle ranches.

I was quite surprised to find among the Paez Indians a character that I had noticed previously in Central America, but of which no record could be found in current literature. I refer to

2: Pittier de Fábrega E-4, 5 (1906) 1907
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1147 the odor peculiar to the Indians, which becomes quite noticeable when they are sweating and which so closely resembles that of the secretion of the so-called *sahino*, or wild hog (*Dicotyles tajacu* L.), that I have more than once been deceived into believing that our trail crossed the path of a drove of these animals.

516 When at rest the Paez men almost invariably sit on their heels, the toes sustaining the whole weight of the body, while the women sit with their legs stretched together on the ground,
[544] even when near the fire in their houses. In micturition young
481 girls remain standing. The gait of both men and women is short-paced and easy, the body being always slightly inclined forward, probably on account of the habit of carrying heavy loads.

824 Like all children of Nature, the Paez Indians are very keen
126 observers of their surroundings, as is shown by the minuteness of their differentiation in plants and in certain groups of insects. Castillo, for instance, gives the names of no fewer than six different varieties of ants —

[552]

kan-kik	*cĭ-kik-ue*	*cĭa-i*
kik-fiuts	*gnue-kandi*	*to-fiti*

and I collected very few plants for which they did not have a ready name.

Reproduction and Death

881 When a girl reached puberty the event was celebrated among the old Paez Indians by a special dance called *itsa-ko*, during which the young naked female was placed in a hole dug outside the hall-house and thoroughly washed with *chicha*. We have no
836 notice of pre-marital liberty being conceded to women, nor of the relation of children to parents in the family organization. As
595 tradition has it, the pre-conquest Paez were polygamous, and notwithstanding the efforts of the missionaries, it is almost certain that this practice has not completely disappeared. We know nothing about the existence of marriage ceremonies before
581 the introduction of the Catholic ritual. It is likely, however,
[586] that marriages were endogamous and free, and, as such, a very frail institution, as Castillo informs us that even in his time